

County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

12860 CROSSROADS PARKWAY SOUTH • CITY OF INDUSTRY, CALIFORNIA 91746
Tel (562) 908-8400 • Fax (562) 908-0459



PHILIP L. BROWNING
Director

SHERYL L. SPILLER
Chief Deputy



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May 8, 2007

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Philip L. Browning, Director

SUBJECT: **BOARD OF SUPERVISOR'S MOTION: PROGRESS REPORT ON LEADER STAKEHOLDER GROUP WITH COMMUNITY ADVOCACY GROUPS AND THE EMPLOYEE UNION (BOARD ORDER #17 – OCTOBER 25, 2006)**

This is to provide you with an update on our meetings with community advocacy groups and SEIU Local 721 members to collect and evaluate their recommendations for best practices of the policy and procedures concerning the existing Los Angeles Eligibility Automated Determination, Evaluation and Reporting System (LEADER), as well as the procurement, conversion and implementation of its replacement. This report has been reviewed by the representatives of the group and their comments have been incorporated.

The group includes staff and members from SEIU Local 721, members from community advocacy groups (Hunger Action Los Angeles, Los Angeles Legal Aid Foundation, and Neighborhood Legal Services), DPSS departmental staff from the DPSS Academy, information systems, program, and line divisions. The group has continued to meet since our January 24, 2007 report and holds smaller workgroup meetings to discuss certain functional areas in greater detail, such as Notices of Action (NOA) and training. The meetings have been extremely valuable for all involved and developed into a collaborative venue with everyone working toward a common goal of improving the effectiveness of the LEADER system and developing requirements for the new automated system.

The following is a recap of some of the group's accomplishments during the past two months.

- Recommended two-day training sessions have been conducted for the Department's Information Systems Analyst Aids.

- A revised Clerical Handbook has been completed and is currently in use at the DPSS Academy.
- Group presentations have been made regarding the LEADER:
 - Change request process,
 - Testing of application enhancements,
 - GEARS-LEADER Interface & Curing GAIN Sanctions, and
 - Functions of the Division's Help Desk operation in identifying and resolving application anomalies.
- The Training Workgroup stakeholders have worked with the DPSS Academy and BWS Line Operations staff to develop clerical LEADER training objectives and the curriculum for Fiscal Year 2007/08.
- The LEADER Stakeholder group's recommendations are being evaluated and finalized for incorporation in the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the new LEADER system.
- NOA issues identified to date by the NOA Workgroup stakeholders continue to be researched and evaluated. Necessary application modifications are made on an as-need basis.

While the requirements that the SEIU Local 721 and community groups wanted to include in the RFP have been finalized, the meetings with SEIU Local 721 and the community will continue to be held. These meetings provide an effective forum for the community and SEIU Local 721 to provide input to the Department. Two of the workgroups created from these meetings continue to meet today to address any new or ongoing training and NOA issues that may arise.

Furthermore, in the true spirit of collaboration and partnership, various members of the LEADER Stakeholder group recently traveled to Sacramento on April 16th to speak at an Assembly Budget hearing in support of the Governor's Proposed Budget, which includes approximately \$2 million in Fiscal Year 2008/09 for ongoing LEADER Replacement System planning efforts (i.e., RFP development activities) in Los Angeles County. Los Angeles County testified along with the State Office of Systems Integration to respond to challenges posed by the Legislative Analysts' Office, who was recommending against the Governor's Proposed Budget with respect to LEADER planning funding. The speakers from Los Angeles County from the LEADER Stakeholder group included SEIU staff and members, and a community advocate from Hunger Action Los Angeles. Each of these speakers focused on a different aspect of why Los Angeles needed a LEADER Replacement System specifically designed to meet the unique challenges and requirements of a County as large and diverse as Los Angeles.

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The feedback from the members of the Legislature was very positive, indicating that the Los Angeles County testimony made a significant impact in garnering legislative support for the Governor's budget proposal and the continuance of our LEADER Replacement System planning funding.

PLB:sb

c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors